

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was recently enacted in efforts to save and create 3.5 million jobs through initiatives in clean energy, health information technology, and transportation and infrastructure projects.

Specifically, more than \$60 million has been allocated for transportation projects in the 13th District. To learn more about these specific projects, please read my press release from [Marc h 6, 2009](#)

. Additionally, the New Jersey Department of Transportation has announced that they will begin in late April posting classifieds for employment opportunities in Recovery projects.

The ARRA also provides relief for the currently unemployed. Specifically, it includes a measure to continue the current extension of unemployment insurance, which would otherwise be phased out at the end of March. Current law provides unemployed workers with up to 33 weeks of extended benefits. The ARRA increases, through December 31, 2009, the current average unemployment insurance benefit by \$25 per week, to \$325 per week. To learn more about the extension of unemployment benefits, please visit <http://workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/unemploy/extenben.asp>

Additionally, the ARRA helps workers to maintain their health coverage while they are between jobs by providing a 65 percent reduction in the premiums payable by involuntarily terminated workers and their families for health care continuation coverage under COBRA. This premium reduction will last up to 9 months and eligibility will be for workers who have been involuntarily terminated during the period from September 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009. For further information on COBRA, please visit www.dol.gov/COBRA.

Furthermore, to stay up-to-date on job training and employment opportunities, please visit the Department of Labor's Recovery website at <http://www.dol.gov/recovery/implement.htm>.